

Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested. Claims 1-54 are pending in the application, with claims 1, 16, 24 and 35 being the independent claims. The latest Advisory Action impermissibly ignored the previously provided Applicant remarks in their entirety. The Applicant respectfully requests full consideration of these remarks.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claims 1-54 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,373,463 to Beeks ("the Beeks patent") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,766,016 to Sinclair et al. ("the Sinclair patent").

Independent Claim 1 and its Dependent Claims

Independent claim 1 recites, an "object being representative of a body part and configured to be contacted by a hand of a user to produce a simulated palpation."

The Examiner states that the Beeks patent does not include a palpation region, but that the Sinclair patent shows "a surgical simulator with tactile feedback." While the Sinclair patent does disclose a surgical simulator, the Sinclair patent fails to disclose "object being representative of a body part and *configured to be contacted by a hand of a user to produce a simulated palpation*" as recited in independent claim 1. The device disclosed in the Sinclair patent uses simulated surgical tools as an interface between the simulated body part and the user of the device and, thus does not disclose or suggest a representation of a body part "*configured to be contacted by a hand of a user*" as recited in independent claim 1.

Hence, the references, either alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest the invention as recited by independent claim 1. Based at least on their dependence upon independent claim 1, dependent claims 2-15 are also allowable.

Independent Claim 16 and its Dependent Claims

Independent claim 16 recites “outputting haptic feedback based on a signal associated with an interaction of the cursor with a graphical representation of a simulated being, the haptic feedback being a simulated pulse of the simulated being.”

As discussed above, the Examiner states that the Beeks patent fails to disclose a palpation region and that the Sinclair patent discloses a surgical simulator with tactile feedback. Neither of the references discloses or suggests, however, “haptic feedback being a simulated pulse of [a] simulated being” as recited in independent claim 16. In fact, both the previous Office Action and the Advisory Action are completely silent with respect to the elements recited in claim 16.

Hence, the references, either alone or in combination, fail to fail to disclose or suggest the invention as recited by independent claim 16. Based at least on their dependence upon independent claim 16, dependent claims 17-23 are also allowable.

Independent Claim 24 and its Dependent Claims

Independent claim 24 recites an “object being representative of a body part and configured to be contacted by a hand of a user to produce a simulated palpation.”

As discussed above, the Examiner states that the Beeks patent fails to disclose a palpation region and that the Sinclair patent discloses a surgical simulator with tactile feedback. Neither of the references discloses or suggests, however, “object being representative of a body part and configured to be *contacted by a hand of a user to produce a simulated palpation*” as recited in

independent claim 24. In fact, the previous Office Action and the Advisory Action are silent with respect to the elements recited in independent claim 24.

Hence, the references, either alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest the invention as recited by independent claim 24. Based at least on their dependence upon independent claim 24, dependent claims 25-34 are also allowable.

Independent Claim 35 and its Dependent Claims

Independent claim 35 recites a “manipulatable object being representative of a body part and configured to be contacted by a hand of a user to produce a simulated palpation.”

The Examiner states that the Beeks patent does not include a palpation region, but that the Sinclair patent shows “a surgical simulator with tactile feedback.” While the Sinclair patent does disclose a surgical simulator, the Sinclair patent fails to disclose or suggest a “*manipulatable object being representative of a body part and configured to be contacted by a hand of a user*” as recited in independent claim 35. The device disclosed in the Sinclair patent uses simulated surgical tools as an interface between the simulated body part and the user of the device, and thus does not disclose or suggest a representation of a body part “*configured to be contacted by a hand of a user*” as recited in independent claim 35.

Hence, the references, either alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest the invention as recited by independent claim 35. Based at least on their dependence upon independent claim 35, dependent claims 36-54 are also allowable.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete response has

been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: _____

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